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Navy Lodge's Diversity Helps Staff Serve Guests

By **ANDREW DAMSTEDT**
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

Navy Lodge Bethesda employees recently celebrated their cultural heritage at a Hospitality and Diversity event onboard Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB).

"We are a small group," said Ana Herrera-Ruiz, Navy Lodge Bethesda general manager. "We have 106 rooms, and we serve a lot of guests every single day. This is not a hotel where people come for leisure. This is a unique place and in order for us to exceed the guests' expectations we really need to understand where they come from, what they're going through and respect their differences as well."

The 22 Navy Lodge employees come from 11 different countries, which were highlighted by cultural displays, Peruvian dancing, regional dialects and traditional foods.

A traditional food that Rahel Mangestah, a front desk clerk, shared was shiro, which comes from Eritrea, a small East African country. The dish is made from chickpeas and local spices, she said. A lot of people don't even know that Eritrea exists, and she said she was glad she was able to share something from her culture with not only her co-workers but others who came to the event.

"It is a very small country so not a lot of people know that it's there," she said. "By sharing food I would hope that people would be able to taste diversity in our food."

Even while the event was going on, Navy Lodge staff still helped guests check-out and answer questions

about their rooms. NSAB Commanding Officer Capt. Marvin L. Jones told the assembled crowd that the hospitality employees often work behind the scenes to provide a comfortable stay – so a 'thank you' is sometimes overlooked.

"First of all I want to say something that you all don't hear often enough in your business," Jones said. "And that is, thank you. Thank you for the work that you all do and the hospitality you all provide for everyone."

He noted that the Navy Lodge was a good example of a team that takes their differences and work to create a strong team.

"Our diversity is our strength. Our differences embolden us. They allow us to better serve our customers; it helps us understand each other better," Jones said.

The 11 countries represented by the 22 Navy Lodge Bethesda employees include Antigua, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guatemala, Holland, Mexico, The Republic of the Philippines, Peru and Spain.

Roberto Huamantumba, Navy Lodge mechanic, performed Peruvian music with his two other bandmates, Ladislao Toledo and Lucio Almidon. During some of their musical numbers, Andrea Mejia and her mother, Ana Mejia, danced the marinera, a Peruvian dance.

Ruth Moore said she has been a repeat customer at the Navy Lodge because of the top-notch service she has received while staying there.

"I like that they were able to highlight the staff," she said. "It's kind of an unthinkable job in a way. I

thought it was wonderful to highlight all their culture."

Another part of the day's event was a bed-making competition in the only open room that day between the Navy Lodge Bethesda and Fisher House's housekeeping staffs. Each group competed to see who could make up a bed with two people on each team. Ana Amaya and Adrina Titus, Navy Lodge Bethesda housekeepers, got the fastest time of two minutes, five seconds.

Amaya said she liked the cultural aspect of the event and was glad she could share some of her Salvadorian culture. She's been at her job for about four months and said she enjoys working with a diverse group of people.

"Everybody works together," she said. "It's nice working in a group and you can help each other."



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Ana Mejia performs a traditional Peruvian dance during the Navy Lodge's Fourth Annual Hospitality and Diversity event.



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Members of a traditional Peruvian band played traditional songs for staff and visitors during the Navy Lodge's Fourth Annual Hospitality and Diversity event.

COMMANDANT'S COLUMN



Rear Adm. Yancy B. Lindsey
Commandant, Naval District Washington

Autumn has definitely arrived here in the National Capital Region with all its beauty, color and cool breezes. Transition to a new season signals a transition in our lifestyles and activities...both at work and at home.

Before you venture into winter duties/responsibilities, driving, sports activities, household chores, etc., please take a minute to ensure your equipment is in good operating condition and you are physically and mentally prepared. Think through the “what ifs”, identify and evaluate the risks, and take necessary precautions to ensure your safety and that of your shipmates, friends and family.

Congratulations to Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (large) and Naval Support Activity Annapolis (small) for earning the FY15 NDW Installation Excellence Award in their category. They will represent us well at the Navy Installations Command level.

Thank you for your efforts during Energy Action Month. However, we must continue to be aware of our energy us-

age and constantly look for opportunities to reduce our energy footprint. On Oct. 15, we announced an Energy Biggest Loser competition that will run through Nov. 30. The competition will reward the top three NDW installations who do the best job of conserving energy during the month of November as compared to November 2014. Winning installations will be awarded with funding for base energy improvement projects.

November is Warrior Care Month where we publicly recognize our wounded warrior heroes. Warrior Care Month was established to increase awareness of programs and resources available to wounded, ill and injured service members, their families, and those who care for them. In addition to raising awareness, there are several events scheduled within the Region to observe Warrior Care Month and highlight the extraordinary resilience of our recovering service members. Take some time this month to learn more about wounded warrior programs and thank our wounded warriors and their families for their service and sacrifice. For more information on the Navy Wounded Warrior — Safe Harbor program and events this month visit Safeharbor.navylive.dodlive.mil.

A lot of you will be traveling during the holiday season to spend time with family and friends. We all certainly have much to be grateful for during this Thanksgiving. I’m grateful for your dedication and the outstanding work you do each and every day to support our Fleet, fighters, families, and nation. From my family to yours, please enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday. If you are able to travel during the holiday weekend, please allow plenty of time for the journey so you are able to return home safe and rested. You are our Navy’s most valuable resource.

Happy Thanksgiving.

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Bethesda Notebook

Captain's Call

Navy Capt. Jennifer L. Vedral-Baron, commanding officer for Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (Navy), holds a Captain's Call Monday at 7 and 9 a.m., and 2 p.m. in Bldg. 10's Clark Auditorium. All Navy personnel assigned to WRNMMC are highly encouraged to attend.

Leadership Academy

The next Walter Reed Bethesda Leadership Academy class is Nov. 16-20 in Building 5, Heroes Zone, Rm. 4008/4009. Anyone in a middle manager role or aspiring to be a middle manager is encouraged to attend the class. For registration, go to <http://tinyurl.com/WRNMMC-LSA-RBCT>. Class size is limited to 28 participants.

Unity of Effort Benevolent Summit

The Unity of Effort Benevolent Summit will be held 17 November 2015 on Naval Support Activity Bethesda at the Fitness Center gym in Bldg. 17 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Warrior and Family Coordination Cell will discuss patient composition trends, updates to donation and well-wish visit policies, and event participation feedback. The Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center will present information on their Voluntary Service Program and on other opportunities for giving back to our nation's veterans. Following the summit will be a Prosperity Fair/Welcome Home event open to all Wounded Warrior's, Active Duty, veterans, patients and family members. More than 70 organizations will be on hand to provide information on various programs, opportunities and events.

Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bethesda

Commanding Officer: Capt. Marvin L. Jones
Public Affairs Officer: Ronald D. Inman
Public Affairs Office: 301-295-1803

NSAB Ombudsman
Michelle Herrera 240-370-5421

NSAB Chaplain's Office 301-319-4443/4706

Journal Staff

Managing Editor MC3 Hank Gettys
WRNMMC Editor Bernard Little

Sexual Assault Response
Coordinator Hotline 301-442-2053

Staff Writers MC1 Christopher Krucke
Andrew Damstedt
Sarah Marshall
Sharon Renee Taylor
Joseph Nieves
Jamie Petroskey

NSA Bethesda
Fleet And Family Support Center 301-319-4087

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
Office of Media Relations 301-295-5727

NSAB Emergency Information Line 301-295-6246

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Clinical Psychology Interns Graduate

By **SHARON RENEE TAYLOR**
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

The third graduating class of clinical psychology interns at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) marked their achievement with a ceremony in Memorial Auditorium Oct. 23. Five Sailors and four Soldiers completed year-long programs led by Army Maj. (Dr.) Jessica Parker and Navy Capt. (Dr.) Richard D. Bergthold.

Bergthold described the graduates as, “Young, driven, and very professional.”

The new Army psychologists remain at WRNMMC for a residency program. The Sailors depart for their first assignments as psychologists, rotating between Navy hospitals, a clinic, and a medical center.

Although collocated at WRNMMC as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), the Army and Navy programs are separately accredited by the American Psychological Association.

“Though we are two separately accredited programs, with two different training missions [one supporting Army Medical Command, and the other Navy Medicine], we have the privilege of training side-by-side in this joint health care delivery system,” Bergthold explained.

The opportunity to learn from one another, to learn different military cultures, and to learn how to effectively provide care in both the Army and Navy systems is a strength for both programs, according to Bergthold, director of the Navy Clinical Psychology Internship Program at WRNMMC.

“I am confident that our Navy graduates understand the unique challenges of working in a joint environment, working with colleagues wearing a different uniform, and are thus better prepared to work cooperatively in future joint health care missions,” he added.

Commissioned in 2011 with the Army Reserve through the Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP), Army Capt. Rebecca Gillespie, a

graduate of the recent Army Clinical Psychology Internship Program at WRNMMC, said it provided a unique experience working with service members and Wounded Warriors.

“It really helps to put things in perspective,” she said. “We’ve been pushed and challenged in this program.”

“We are extremely proud of our Army officers for the work they have done this year in training, and for the great work we know they will do in the field for years to come,” said Parker, director of the Army Clinical Psychology Internship Program at WRNMMC.

Navy Lt. Jon Dimond completed graduate studies at the New School for Social Research in New York City. He researched clinical psychology programs and explained why his first choice was the program at WRNMMC. He said he was fortunate to be matched with the Navy and WRNMMC.

“It’s an incredibly strong clinical training program, [which is] one of the reasons I wanted to come to Walter Reed. It’s a



PHOTO BY SHARON RENEE TAYLOR

Five Sailors and four Soldiers joined the ranks of military psychologists. The nine graduated from a year-long Clinical Psychology Internship in a ceremony held at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Oct. 23.

highly-resourced program, so there’s a massive amount of expertise here, specialty clinics, people who are really at the top of their fields as far as sleep studies, behavioral health, trauma treatments, psychotherapy—so it’s just a fantastic place to train and grow as a clinician,” Dimond explained.

The Navy lieutenant soon heads for his first clinical psychology assignment in Yokosuka, Japan. “I’m so excited,” he said.

“Navy Medicine is fortunate to have such high caliber individuals,” Bergthold added.

The incoming class of psychology interns arrived at WRNMMC this month.

Physical Therapist Helps Soldiers Stay Active

By **ANDREW DAMSTEDT**
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

The Warrior Transition Brigade-National Capital Region’s (WTB) physical therapist had a daunting task when she first started her position: Develop a physical therapy program for a group of Soldiers who had a variety of issues – not all of which were traditional orthopedic problems.

“So most of the time, when people think of physical therapy they think of ‘I tore my ACL so I’m going to see my physical therapist three times a week and do 20 reps of one exercise and two reps of another exercise,’” said Katherine Bentley, a board-certified orthopedic clinical specialist. “My role here is different because I work with all Soldiers here — we have close to 240 Soldiers here right now. Some of them have orthopedic issues or neurological issues and are seeing a physical therapist at (Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC)) in conjunction with me.”

But other Soldiers in the WTB, who may have cardiac issues or behavioral health is-

suues or have completed their physical therapy at the hospital, still can have Bentley help them stay active.

“I work at creating exercise plans for them to make exercise a part of their day-to-day life,” she said. “A lot of these Soldiers were coming from very active environments, where they were exercising on a daily basis. And then they come here, where it’s very different and all of the sudden they have this diagnosis, they have medications they’re taking — they maybe don’t know how to exercise or don’t know what’s safe to exercise and I work with that plan and tailor it to them.”

WTB Rehab Manager Britany Topper said Bentley has a positive energy and attitude that has helped her establish a successful program.

“I’d say most people would have come into that position finding it to be a rather daunting task to take on,” Topper said, noting that the position had been vacant for six months before Bentley arrived. “There was never a time that she said, ‘I don’t think this is possible.’ And she was also willing to try things to see if it would work ... It’s not often you get an em-



PHOTO BY MC3 HANK GETTYS

Katherine Bentley, a board-certified orthopedic clinical specialist working for The Warrior Transition Brigade-National Capital Region has been helping Soldiers stay active through the adaptive sports and reconditioning program in which Soldiers can join a walk/run group, go on a hike, do suspension training or do a total body workout, among other daily activities.

ployee like her who constantly works hard, constantly wants to do better by the Soldiers.”

Bentley said she has an open-door policy for the Soldiers and often will see them sooner than the 90-day requirement from their first exam.

“As I’ve gotten to be more of a face that the Soldiers know and recognize, they’ll come in

and talk to me about things and say ‘Oh, I’m starting this new CrossFit routine. What are some things that you can help me with?’” she said.

One of the ways Bentley has been helping them stay active is through the WTB adaptive sports and reconditioning program she has implemented after starting in February.

Soldiers can join a walk/run group, go on a hike, do suspension training or do a total body workout, among other daily activities that are either run by Bentley or Kelly Mundell, a physical therapist assistant.

In addition to helping the Soldiers stay active, Mundell said the classes help the Soldiers get to know one another.

“They came from such a tight-knit community and now they are kind of separated during this process, so to get them to come back together has been nice to watch,” Mundell said.

Army Sgt. Darryl Burton, who participated in the suspension training exercise, had nothing but praise for how the program has helped him get strength back in his ankle after his injury. Burton’s accident in 2014 left him unable to run or do martial arts. He said the physical therapy program at the medical center and working with Bentley and Mundell has really helped him.

“It helped because I had trouble maintaining my stability on the left side of my body,” said Burton, who is looking to



USO Halloween Party

PHOTOS BY AIRMAN MATTHEW HOBSON

United Service Organization (USO) Warrior and Family Care Center on Naval Support Activity Bethesda held it's Halloween party Oct 30 at the center. The event had activities for all ages including a dinner, pumpkin bowling, s'mores, bobbing for apples, face painting, trick or treating, a raffle and a DJ.



NSAB Swimming Pool Becomes Scuba Classroom



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Participants in the introductory scuba course pose for a photo during one of their recent classes at the Aquatic Center onboard Naval Support Activity Bethesda. The scuba class is one of the more popular classes offered by the Aquatic Center with the next class set for Spring.

By **ANDREW DAMSTEDT**
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer

For several evenings in October, the Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) swimming pool was used not only by swimmers, but by a class of beginning scuba divers.

The introductory scuba course has been one of the more popular classes that's been offered by the Morale, Welfare & Recreation Fitness Center – going on since Aquatics Manager Bryan Jackson came to the base in 1989.

“We offer it for everyone to be exposed to the world of under-

water, but it's another program that people have expressed a deep interest [for] in the past,” he said. “Every time we offer it, active duty service members as well as dependents get involved.”

Over the years, various instructors have come to teach the class. For the past few years, local scuba instructor Joe Lodmell and his team have offered classes. He also teaches scuba courses for the Montgomery County Department of Recreation, and one thing he notices when he teaches a military group is those students are more ac-

customed to follow directions.

“They tend to be physically fit and sharp students,” he said. “So we've been very satisfied with the caliber of students we've received [here].”

Army 2nd Lt. Rayad Barakat, a second-year Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) medical student, said he took the course because it always had been something that interested him – noting he

“didn't want to one day have the opportunity to go and see something interesting, but not be able to just because I didn't know how to scuba dive.”

One of the main lessons Lodmell drills into his students: “Plan your dive, dive your plan.” In this beginning course, he said he also stresses in each class that safety is the No. 1 goal, with the No. 2 goal being to have fun.

“It's not going to be fun if it's not safe,” he said. “You have to make it safe and then after that, you have fun. Plan your dive and then dive your plan and have a good time.”

Barakat said he's learned those safety lessons – learning several techniques to keep him and his buddy safe underwater.

During one of the recent classes, Lodmell had the 15 students go over checking their equipment, doing a buddy check and safely entering the water. The students also learned how to follow hand signals, buddy breathing techniques and tired diver tows.

Scuba instructor Richard “RC” Staton said this group did a good job in their beginner course, learning and then showing the proper underwater techniques.

“Things that they did really nicely that I really liked, especially when they were buddy breathing, they would square off and they would hold each other appropriately,” Staton said. “They would share air and never got to the point where they were desperate. They were all calm.”

He said buoyancy is one aspect that is good to work on in a swimming pool first.

“Right now, we have this beautiful pool, we can go down there and it doesn't mind us being on it,” he said. “But this is the place to learn it – and actually understand the whole concept of inhaling and exhaling. Rising while you're inhaling and falling while you're exhaling.”

Army 2nd Lt. Sean Eliot Scott, USU second-year medical student, said he was taking the course because his

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PHOTO BY JAMIE PETROSKEY

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Austin Link, attached to Outpatient Physical Therapy at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, assists in a stretching exercise with a patient.

Corpsman ‘Loves Taking Care of Patients’ Through Physical Therapy

**By JAMIE PETROSKEY
WRNMMC Public
Affairs Staff Writer**

At Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Austin Link of Outpatient Physical Therapy manages more than just patient pain. The phys-

ical therapist technician says throughout his work day he serves as part “motivational speaker, with a little bit of personal trainer thrown in.”

Link began his career in a Navy recruiting office. His recruiter saw his passion for the medical field and positioned him for a medical ca-

reer. Before arriving at WRNMMC, the Navy sent Link to Joint Base San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas, where he spent six months studying and participating in clinical work. During that portion of his training, Link said he noted how much technology and care is seen in military facilities.

“There is so much more a patient can do to further their [own] treatment,” he said.

Most patients come for not only an hour-long session; they also have access to so much more including adaptive sports, swimming and creative arts—just a few additional activities that support patient-centered care.

Outpatients at WRNMMC receive care in the physical therapy room adjacent to the Military Advanced Training Center, better known as the MATC. The brightly-lit PT room with mats for stretching, tables for specific therapies and dozens of colorful props serves as a positive atmosphere to motivate patients during their daily therapies. Link begins his day in the PT room at 7 a.m. with a review of his patients, where he receives guidance from physical therapists to tailor treatments and to incorporate new efforts and technologies into the patient recovery process.

Keeping up with technology is a challenge every day. Improved methods come out daily; PTs and techs ultimately want their patients to have the best care possible, he explained. He called the WRNMMC physical therapy team “awesome,” explaining that they keep up-to-

date with new advancements and share critical information with technicians for faster recovery times for patients.

The department sees patients of all backgrounds, ages and stages of rehabilitation.

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Carrie Dreyer, the Assistant Chief of the Physical Therapy Service in the Department of Rehabilitation, explains that “While we have traditionally seen a mostly active duty population within our outpatient PT clinic, we are seeing more family members and retirees.”

When asked about his favorite part of his job, Link stated that he loves taking care of patients. He recalled a specific instance when he assisted with inpatient PT. He assisted a patient who was on bed rest for several weeks. “We stood the patient [up] for the first time,” Link remembered. He said it was the best moment in his PT career.

The smile on the patient’s face after he took a few steps gave Link an awesome feeling, he explained, knowing he had been a part of the patient’s healing. He attended the patient’s graduation a year after his recovery. He said patients consider him part of their journey, and Link considers his patients a part of his.

The 22-year-old Minnesota native plans to continue his education to become a physical therapy assistant. Link hopes to experience more that the Navy has to offer, including an opportunity to deploy on the USNS Comfort, one of the U.S. Navy’s 1,000-bed hospital ships.

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Bono Hosts Her Last NCR-MD Town Hall

By **BERNARD S. LITTLE**
WRNMMC Public Affairs staff
writer

Navy Rear Adm. (Dr.) Raquel C. Bono encouraged staff at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) to continue their focus on quality, access and cost — the “iron triangle of health care,” during her last town hall meeting as director of the Defense Health Agency’s National Capital Region Medical Directorate (NCR-MD) at WRNMMC on Oct. 28.

Monday, Bono became director of the DHA, established by the Department of Defense on Oct. 1, 2013 to manage the activities of the Military Health System. Air Force Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Douglas Robb, DHA’s first director, is retiring after more than 40 years in uniform.

“The one thing I have learned is that we are a more effective military when we work together, rather than in our separate silos. It’s true on the battlefield, it’s true in the health delivery system, and it’s true at our DHA headquarters [in Falls Church, Va.],” stated Robb in a farewell message to the DHA team.

WRNMMC falls under DHA’s NCR-MD, and Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark, WRNMMC director since Sept. 19, 2013, will serve as interim NCR-MD director until Bono’s permanent successor in that position is named.

During her town hall meeting last week at WRNMMC, Bono stressed her continued focus on the “iron triangle of health care,” stating there will be “no tradeoff [for] improvement on all fronts — not one or the other, or at the expense of the other.”

She explained quality and access result in better patient satisfaction, while showing improved inpatient satisfaction TRISS numbers for the NCR. The Trauma and Injury Severity Scoring (TRISS) system was developed to improve the prediction of patient outcomes following trauma. TRISS is one of the commonly used means for judging hospital performance and monitoring survival rates.

“For me, if any of our patients are able to say, ‘Yes, I would recommend your hospital to my family,’ that tells me a lot,” Bono said. “That means they trust us, and trust us enough [that] they would send their family members [to us].”

“We’ve made a tremendous amount of progress and I’m really proud of all the things we’ve done,” Bono continued. She explained NCR-MD has lowered its third next available appointment number from a high of nearly four days in January to one day in September.

The third next available appointment is the average length of time in days between the day a patient makes a request for an appointment and the third next available appointment for a new patient physical, routine exam, or return visit exam. The third next available appointment is the industry standard used for measuring appointment access, in con-



U.S. NAVY OFFICIAL PHOTO

Rear Adm. Raquel C. Bono

trast to the first and second available appointments, which are often the result of last-minute cancellations, working patients into the schedule, or other events. Officials add the third next available appointment measure best represents the performance of the appointment access system as a whole.

Also during the town hall, Bono discussed deployment of the electronic health record (EHR) within the DHA. She explained the EHR “will help achieve quality, safety, access and [better] healthy outcomes” for beneficiaries. She added possible deployment of the EHR may be accelerated in the NCR-MD, but the system is scheduled to first be deployed in the Pacific Northwest by December 2016.

Bono added the NCR-MD was established in 2013 with overarching goals for FY16-20 of establishing a high-reliability culture of quality and patient partnership, decreasing deferrals, and lowering private sector care costs by bringing beneficiaries back into the MHS.

“As we move forward to our FY 17-21 [strategic initiatives], you will see maturation from the goals [we] started out with and moving them in a way that allows us to capitalize on what you have done [and] our opportunities as we become more familiar with what our patients need, with our systems, and with what we can do collectively,” the admiral said.

She explained that while maintaining a high reliability culture of quality will remain constant, the NCR-MD’s strategic initiatives for FY17-21 include “[continued focus on] seamless care and patient partnership, [to] mature a high reliability culture of quality, [continuing to build] an academic health system, as well as optimizing and fully engaging the direct care system.”

Concluding the meeting, Bono and Clark exchanged coins in recognition of their tenure as directors of the NCR-MD and WRNMMC respectively.

“Ma’am, every time when you look at [the WRNMMC coin], know we have one priority and one priority only, and that is an extraordinary patient experience for every patient, every time,” Clark said.

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Code Green Tests Medical Center's Readiness



PHOTOS BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

During the Code Green exercise at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Oct. 30, simulated casualties are tested for radiation contamination before being prepared for admission to the medical center and treated for their injuries.

By **BERNARD S. LITTLE**
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) conducted a Code Green exercise Oct. 30 to assess its readiness for a multi-casualty event.

"This was a great opportunity for our hospital to test our emergency plans for a mass casualty incident that involves a radiological agent," said Christopher Gillette, command emergency manager for WRNMMC.

He explained the scenario for the exercise included a bus explo-

sion as a result of a suspected terrorist attack consisting of a dirty bomb with radioactive material. There were approximately 30 casualties and the hospital prepared to receive a surge of patients, some arriving with radioactive contamination.

Gillette said WRNMMC consistently holds exercises to ensure staff is prepared to respond to emergencies. "Every exercise always provides opportunities for improvement, [and] we look forward to receiving valuable feedback from multiple subject matter experts who evaluate the exercises. Our goal is to maintain continuous readiness. This exercise, in addition to the multiple all-hazards training activities we conduct throughout the year, helps to ensure we maintain the highest state of readiness while maximizing the safety and security of our staff, patients and visitors," he said.

Communication and safety are always paramount during an emergency and exercise, Gillette explained. "How do we receive word of that incident? Were we able to pass that information on to our staff members? Are we able to protect our staff, patients, visitors and facility?"

"Medical surge is also a challenge," Gillette added. "We are a 24-7

health-care facility with an inpatient and emergency care mission which doesn't stop regardless of the situation. This is a challenge when we're notified of a mass casualty incident that could involve a surge of patients. Do we have enough trained medical teams to rapidly respond to receive casualties, some who may be exposed to a chemical or radiological agent?"

Timothy Leathers, program manager for contingency resources in WRNMMC's Office of Emergency Management, ensures the medical center has adequate inventory in the case of a catastrophic incident. During last week's exercise, he served as an exercise controller to make sure things went as planned during the Code Green.

The exercise included participants moulaged to simulate casualties and add realism to the event, Leathers explained. "At the mass casualty locations, the first responders, nurses and doctors can triage and treat the victims according to their conditions and what the [providers] see, thereby enhancing their readiness and skills," he added.

"Each time we [exercise] it brings a better experience because we're constantly learning and preparing," Leathers said.

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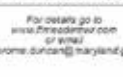
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ACTIVE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

go back to his unit. "It helped me with my walking. I can't quite run yet – we're working on it – it's helping strengthening my ankle. I'm not quite running yet, but by me doing this it's getting me ready to run. I want to run again."

Bentley, who came from working at the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, Va., said she always had an interest in working with service members even before her husband, Navy Lt. Jason Bentley, joined the military.

"The military for physical therapists is a really great setting, you have a lot more autonomy than you have in practice outside the military," she said. "That was something I really liked. I was more of a provider for my patients than just kind of doing the same thing all the time. I was able to do more decision making and really help them get what they need."

Not to say she didn't love being a physical therapist outside the military, but Bentley said she likes working with the military population as her way of giving back to them.

"Especially with our Soldiers here in the WTB — it's a scary time for them," she said. "Some of them don't know, what it is that brought them here they've had a pretty significant change to their life. So being able to walk with them in that process as they're discovering what they can do and helping to keep them whole as [a] person, I think is really important."

Another program Bentley has been focused on this year is preparing WTB Soldiers to go to the Warrior Games regional trials at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"They've been training, they've been practicing whatever sport they want to get involved in," Bentley said. "We help them with that some, but there

are coaches — I'm not an expert in wheelchair basketball or archery, those aren't things I know a lot about — so what I do is say, "Ok, they can do archery, but they have this shoulder injury so these things need to be taken into account." So we have all of these different adaptations that we can tell the coaches."

There are seven WTB Soldiers and a veteran going to the trials, where Bentley will cheer them on from her office in Bethesda because even though she'd like to go, she has a lot of other Soldiers to help treat on-board Naval Support Activity Bethesda.

Bentley wants to continue to grow the activities that the WTB can offer the Soldiers to encompass their unique needs and interest. One such class is the TRX class — which is for suspension training.

"We're hoping to create more classes and exercise routines that specifically target our 'Return to Duty' population so they are prepared to enter back into their communities physically fit and with a reduced risk for developing injuries once they begin a more rigorous physical training regimen with their units," Bentley said.

She also wants to ensure the Soldiers who are transitioning out of the Army keep exercising, mentioning that current research shows that the amount of obese or overweight veterans is equal to the rest of the population. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) research shows that seven in 10 veterans who receive VA care are either overweight or obese.

"We want to create a set of veterans that are as successful out of the military as they were in the military," Bentley said. "So giving them the tools after they leave here, whether they return to active duty, they need to be in good shape ... if they don't return to active duty, we want them to stay healthy and living a healthy lifestyle outside of the Warrior Transition Brigade."

CLASSROOM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

upcoming rotation is in Hawaii where he hopes to get some diving in with other medical school students.

"Breathing underwater is a cool feeling — I haven't done that before," he said. "Joe does a really good job with the class. I feel very confident in his abilities — same with RC and Collin (Crowder). They are a great group of guys to be teaching a class. I have every bit of confidence when I go out on my own."

The students went to a quarry in Lake Phoenix in Virginia for their open water evaluation to become a National Association of Underwater Instructors-certified diver. A written exam is also required for the certification.

"I love teaching new scuba students more than anything," Lodmell said. "They are the ones who still get to see their first turtle, their first stingray — their first shark. I have seen thousands all over the world, but the real excitement for me is to see a student encounter new critters for the first time. That is the coolest thing ever."



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Scuba instructor Collin Crowder teaches beginning scuba divers a buddy breathing technique that they then practiced in the Naval Support Activity Bethesda swimming pool.



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